

1833

A
COMPARATIVE VIEW
OF THE
PUBLIC BURDENS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN
AND
IRELAND.

WITH
A PROPOSAL for putting both ISLANDS on an
EQUALITY, in Regard to the FREEDOM of
FOREIGN TRADE.

Omnino, qui Reipublicæ præfaturi sunt, deo Platonis præcepta
teneant; unum ut utilitatem civium sic quæant, ut quiscun-
que agunt ad eam referant; obliti commodorum suorum; alio-
rum ut totum corpus Reipublicæ curant; ne dum partem ali-
quam tuentur; reliquas destruant.

Cic. de Officiis.

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A
COMPARATIVE VIEW
OF THE
PUBLIC BURDENS
OF GREAT BRITAIN



IN TWO VOLUMES

WITH

AN APPROPRIATE SUPPLEMENT TO THE FIRST VOLUME
RELATIVE TO THE FREEDOM OF
FOREIGN TRADE.

Printed by J. G. & J. H. Sturges, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.
1847.

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 nel that separates the shores of Great Britain
 and Ireland, which channel in the middle
 ought always to have been considered as a
 more unit of the sea giving us the advan-
 tage of a more extended coast, and thus
 insuring the convenience of merchandise by
 facilitating purchases and sales, and thus
 doing us more service than the chief harbours of
 the world.

OF
**COMPARATIVE VIEW
 OF THE
 PUBLIC BURDENS
 OF
 GREAT BRITAIN and
 IRELAND, &c.**

THOUGH the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland are so strongly connected by the natural situation of their territory, by intermarriages, by an intermixture of property, by a conformity of laws and interests, and by many other ties; yet the narrow policy of former ages has raised up a wall of separation between them, that has hitherto greatly obstructed their mutual prosperity. We are every day made to consider Canada and Florida as one territory, though they are more remote from each other than Copenhagen is from Gibraltar; and yet we absurdly look upon Great Britain and Ireland as states having different interests, though the distance between their shores in some places is not so great as that between the opposite shores of several friths

in this island. Were the shores of Lake Erie or Lake Superior, in North America, to be well peopled with British subjects, we should regard it as the height of impolicy if the mercantile intercourse between the northern and southern shores of the same lake were to be checked by high duties and prohibitions. Those lakes however, are much more considerable bodies of water, than the channel that separates the shores of Great Britain and Ireland, which channel, in true policy, ought always to have been considered but as a mere arm of the sea, giving us the advantage of a more extended sea coast, and facilitating the conveyance of merchandize by coasting navigation.

Exclusive privileges nevertheless having been once introduced, from the weak principle of drawing the chief resources of government from exported and imported merchandize*, each island soon began to believe the other possessed of such advantages, as rendered prohibitions necessary for the security of their respective interests. This destructive system is now thought by many people to be the natural system; or at least they alledge, that the public burdens borne by the subjects in each island are so disproportionate as to render a commercial equality for both extremely difficult, if not impracticable. Others, with much more reason, regard the reciprocal restraints on trade between the two islands as most unnatural; and think that it would be far from being difficult or impracticable to adjust the differences

* A fund of taxation at that time probably not one tenth part so large as that of the produce of the land, joined to the internal consumption.

ferences in the public burdens of each, were an accurate examination and estimate of those differences but once obtained. I have, in the following pages, attempted such an examination and such an estimate, with a view to the establishment of an equality of trade in both islands, hoping for the indulgence of the public, if, upon a subject of such national importance, which has not hitherto been made an object of discussion by any of our political or commercial writers that I have met with, I should not be able to give all the satisfaction that could be wished. When the subject once comes under the deliberation of the parliament of each kingdom, the happy consequences flowing from an equality of trade in both islands, will then appear with all their evidence and force, and we shall have reason to be astonished, how such an establishment, so easily to be accomplished, and now become so necessary, could have been so long neglected.

By the present commercial system, Ireland considers herself as the most aggrieved; but she has been long accustomed to complain of other hardships than that of a limited trade, which hardships, when the actual situation of that island is examined, will appear to be founded more on popular opinion than reality. The most plausible of these is, the excessive drain of wealth occasioned by the absentees or landholders not resident in Ireland, which the Irish allege as a grievance peculiar to them; and the next is the great weight of their taxes paid directly to government. Now, though I acknowledge, that the burdens and grievances of Ireland are very considerable, and, on our side, in the highest

highest degree impolitic, I hope nevertheless to make it evident, that the number of her absentees, and the excess of her taxes cannot be reckoned among those grievances. I deny that the drain of absentees is a tax peculiar to Ireland. It is a tax which the capital of every great empire draws from all its remote provinces, and in the British state is not more paid by Ireland than by the distant counties in Great Britain. This will appear evident to the conviction of every reader, who considers the nature of the internal circulation of a state, and examines what are the chief sources of its opulence and wealth.

The country is the chief productive fund of national wealth; and though it be continually pouring into the capital city, yet the small stock that remains behind, added to the frugality that prevails there, suffices, with the bounty of nature, to afford new supplies, and at the same time to maintain a kind of easiness in the remote towns and villages, provided the demands of the capital be not exorbitant. An hundred men employed in country labour will produce more to the state, than an hundred thousand livery servants, coachmen, and chairmen in London; for these last, though not employed in destroying and slaughtering, produce no more national wealth than an hundred thousand

† The people of Ireland think their circumstances much worse than they really are, and have had many pseudo patriots among them, the foremost of whom is the witty author, but wretched politician, Swift, who have studiously endeavoured to make them believe so. For one monument in memory of Swift as a politician, the Irish ought to erect twenty to the memory of bishop Berkeley, as there is much more true political knowledge in his *Queries* alone, than in all Swift's works put together.

soldiers

soldiers encamped on the same spot, would produce, as London, so far from enriching the country, is in great part maintained and supported by the distant provinces gratis. For example, suppose the rents of the absentees from the county of Northumberland, which probably exceed fifty thousand pounds, are to be paid at the capital, and that a company of merchants at Newcastle send coals to that value to London, those merchants may be paid for their coals by bills of exchange upon the stewards of the absentees of the same county, in which case it is plain, Northumberland not only furnishes the coals, but furnishes the payment of them. Again, supposing a Lincolnshire grazier brings up a thousand head of cattle to London, the butcher who purchases those cattle, we shall suppose for eight thousand pounds, by paying that sum into the treasury, may procure from thence a draught of the same value upon a collector of the excise in Lincolnshire, which he gives to the grazier, who receives cash for it upon his return home. I know not whether this precise method be used in this kingdom; but I know that it is practised in France, and whatever be the channel of exchanges, it comes in the end to the same thing, and plainly proves that Lincolnshire pays Lincolnshire, and London receives the cattle for nothing. These examples may suffice in place of an hundred others, and may serve to check the presumption of the Londoners, who vaunt the prodigious supplies that city affords the state, and expect that their factious deliberations should have a controlling influence in national counsels.

But

But if the distant provinces be continually pouring into the capital more than ever returns, what becomes of all that wealth centering in London? That question may be answered by another; what becomes of all the coals carried to London? Both are consumed there. If all the demands of the rich landholders, absentees from their estates by their residence in London, added to the demands of government upon the distant provinces were to be paid in cash, it is plain that within the compass of one year, not five shillings in silver would be found in Great Britain out of the county of Middlesex. But both the wants of the state and of the rich proprietors require a circulation of a different kind. The taxes and rents are mostly exchanged on the spot for provisions and merchandise, necessaries wanted at the capital, and the bills for those provisions and merchandise ballance the country's debts to the center of government and chief residence of the land proprietors, the money or cash, both in town and country, remaining at its usual equilibrium, unless some extraordinary demand of government, such as the maintenance of an army abroad, should draw a more than ordinary proportion of it to the capital, in order to be transported out of the kingdom. Ireland, therefore, cannot state the expences of its absentees as a peculiar hardship, for in that article, it has only neighbour's fare, it being certain that the remote provinces, both within and without the island of Great Britain, receive no equivalent whatever for great part of what they furnish to the capital, except the equivalent of protection and defence. At the capital resides
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the intelligence that directs government, accompanied by many luxurious appendages, together with ten thousands of idlers, allured thither by pleasure only, with great numbers more, whose occupations have no relation to industry, and all are consumers, yielding no retribution of wealth for wealth. Those in the country, on the other hand, who give themselves to agriculture, are always employed in producing something that did not exist before; and this produce, on the whole, in every well regulated state, ought to be so abundant as amply to suffice for the maintenance, the clothing, housing firing, &c. of the whole inhabitants, with some reserve for an accumulation of wealth. Bodies politic, in this respect, have an apt resemblance to the animal body, and with them every day verifies the truth of the fable of the belly and the members, the latter feeding the former; but as this is a natural state, it is a state that does not require a remedy, and nothing but ignorance or cross humour can reckon it a disease.

The murmurers about the absentees from Ireland found their whole reasoning upon a sophism, never considering Ireland as a part of a great sovereignty; but falsely supposing it a free independent sovereignty of itself, maintaining itself in peace with its neighbours by its own strength, and regulating all its political and commercial interests freely by its own deliberations. But no man of sense and candour, the least acquainted with the subject, will affirm that to be the actual state of Ireland. The army maintained there, by the confession of the Irish themselves, is intended only for quelling the domestic disturbances

turbances of the peace, and is allowed by those gentlemen of Ireland, who know their country well, not to be too numerous for that purpose. Against a foreign enemy, they have the protection of the fleet and army of Great Britain, joined with their own auxiliary force, and that of American Britons; all forming but one mass of power, capable of making itself respected by any state in Europe, that should think of annoying it. This formidable power must have a center somewhere; and this center is situated most commodiously for the whole in Great Britain. What limits bodies politic ought to be reduced to, or what extent they ought to acquire, for the best well-being of the people that compose them, is a question that politicians and lawgivers will never be able to resolve. I reason only upon the actual state of Great Britain and Ireland as forming one sovereignty, swayed and directed by one supreme deliberation, all the parts of which ought to contribute to the support of the whole. And Ireland, when considered in this view, will be found to be more favoured in the article of absentees, than many remote parts of England; for since Dublin is become so large, so populous and elegant a city, with established theatres, and abundance of other amusements for the affluent, nearly on a par with those of London, by far the greatest number of the nobility and gentry of Ireland, who do not reside upon their estates, make that the field for displaying their luxury, or for enjoying the pleasures of select societies and literary intimacies, all of which that capital affords in an eminent degree. The nobility and gentry of the northern

thern counties of England have no such gay and agreeable place of resort to prevent their flocking to London; and whichever way they travel, their rents must follow them.

In a monarchical government, the very form of the constitution necessarily draws many of the nobility and gentry to the chief residence of the supreme governor. When the number of these absentees becomes excessive, I do not deny but it may be impoverishing to the provinces, and consequently prejudicial to the whole community. But Ireland is much more secure against such an evil than the remote provinces of Great Britain; for, as I have above observed, the elegancies and luxuries of Dublin, with the parliament resident there, will always serve as checks against the temptation of flocking to London, and will retain at home a proportional greater number of the Irish gentry, when compared with the gentry of Great Britain. Though in such a republican state as Switzerland, a large capital city composed of absentees, is not necessary, and would be extremely detrimental: yet in a commercial nation wholly surrounded by the sea, having a maritime city for the capital, and a naval force to maintain for its defence, the very resort of the landed gentlemen thither, provided it be not excessive, contributes to diffuse prosperity over the whole, by creating a great intercourse by sea between the seat of empire and the provinces, and inducing greater numbers of people to prosecute a sea-faring life. The immense coasting trade of Great Britain is owing to the vast concourse of people to London; and while this trade excites to industry in the remote parts in a greater degree than could be

expected if every gentleman were to spend his rent among his tenants upon his estate, the cause that promotes it may be reckoned beneficial to the kingdom. The people in Ireland cannot justly allege that the counties in Great Britain can afford to pay large sums to absentees at London, better than Ireland can, since the British absentees reside in the same country and great part of the sums must return back by circulation. From the examples of Northumberland and Lincolnshire, it appears plain that the returns are not to be counted upon. This traffic is not so much a circulation as a *current* flowing one way, and ending in evaporation or consumption; but at the same time partly assisting in giving activity to the machine of government, upon which depends the security and prosperity of the whole.

From the above reasoning, with regard to the absentees, we may safely draw the following corollary, That the apprehensions of those are wholly groundless, who think that if Ireland were permitted a free liberty in trade and commerce, she would even drain the opulence from Great Britain, and soon become of more prejudice than service to us. It is demonstrably clear, that while the seat of government of the British nation remains in this island, Ireland, like every other distant member, must contribute her share to the luxurious waste at the capital, and consequently the superiority of wealth must always be on our side. In proportion as Ireland becomes richer, so will she prosper more within herself, and contribute more to the opulence of Great Britain. Besides, commerce, like every other thing, has its *ne plus ultra*, or fixt limit; for allowing that the low
rents

rents and low wages in Ireland might at first act as a premium in promoting its foreign trade, and that by a large balance it soon accumulated much wealth, yet that very wealth, by enlarging the mass in circulation, would raise the price of land, and of every thing else, and of course check the farther enlargement of the trade, and lessen the annual ballance. We do not read in ancient history that the Romans, after they had annexed Sicily to their empire, put the least restraint upon its trade, or thought that island would swallow up Italy. Nay, the small kingdom of Naples has not the least jealousy of Sicily, though the proportion between the insular and continental territory of the Neapolitans is much greater than between Ireland and Great Britain. There is a fashion in politics as in every thing else. Towards the end of the last century, and in the beginning of this, the great opulence of the Dutch astonished all their neighbours, and the political writers of those and of modern times, having considered their narrow territory, and the various manufactures carried on by them, have, very erroneously, attributed their wealth to those two circumstances, the importance of which they have exaggerated beyond measure. Now nothing is more easily demonstrable than that the Dutch have been indebted for their power and opulence, not to manufactures, but to territorial riches, and, next to that, to the universal freightage of the products and merchandize of other nations, added to their spirit of frugality and hoarding. The Dutch, I fancy, would have been far from adopting the maxims attributed to them by our political writers; and if they

they could have associated to their republic four or five of the adjoining provinces, they would not have restrained those provinces from pushing their industry and commerce as far as they possibly could. The notion of concentrating manufactures, where the territory is large and fertile, is in the highest degree absurd. A farmer who should lay all his dung, or throw all his seed into his garden, could not expect such return, as he who prudently distributed both among the different inclosures of his farm.

If Ireland cannot count the number of her absentees as a political grievance peculiar to her, neither can she reckon herself aggrieved by the excess of taxes raised for the direct support of government. Taxes in every state ought to bear a certain proportion to the wealth or yearly income of that state, and the proper standard for computing this wealth or income, though not the full and exact measurement of it, is the yearly rents of all the lands, joined to the ballance of the foreign trade. The land-rents of Ireland are generally stated, by those who are well acquainted with the country, at two millions five hundred thousand pounds. Above forty years ago, two millions was reckoned an undervaluation for those rents, and many people now suppose them near three millions. A deduction of a considerable part ought to be made on account of the absentees; for it would not be just to count that as a revenue, which goes out of the kingdom; yet as Ireland acquits herself of that debt, whatever it be, by the profits arising from the ballance of her trade with Great Britain and other states, this last may, in the present

present computation, be put as an equivalent for the preceding deduction, especially as it is known to yield a surplus. We have then, as the standard of the actual wealth of Ireland, two millions five hundred thousand pounds†; and the taxes amount, communibus annis, to about eight hundred thousand pounds, which is not quite a third of the supposed fund.

Let us examine the burdens of Great Britain by the same standard. The amount of the land-tax in England makes the rents of the lands ten millions; but as that valuation is generally allowed to be hardly more than one half of the value, we shall state the real rents of all the lands of England at twenty millions. At the union of England and Scotland, the land rents of the latter, were most impolitically and absurdly rated but at a fortieth part of the lands of the former, which were then computed but at ten millions. The land-rents of Scotland by that estimation would only make two hundred and fifty thousand pounds; but as that was a great undervaluation, and very considerable improvements have been made there within these sixty years, it will be nearer the truth to reckon the land-rents of that part of the island, one million and an half, which added to the rents of England, makes the sum of twenty-one millions and an half. To this must be added the balance of our foreign trade, which is by some computed at three millions, by others

† I must caution my reader not to think this the whole fund, though it has been ignorantly taken as such by Swift. It is only a standard of wealth justly proportional to that in Great Britain; and the original source of every other fund.

others at four, and by others at four and an half. We shall take the highest sum, which added to the land-rents, makes twenty-six millions as the standard of taxation for Great Britain. Let us now see what proportion the taxes or public supplies bear to that fund. The grants for the year 1770, every article appropriated, amount to above seven millions; but to these must be added other taxes upon the people, such as four millions five hundred thousand pounds, for the annuities yearly due to the public creditors; eight hundred thousand pounds as his majesty's civil list, and at least seven hundred thousand pounds, as the unappropriated surplus of the sinking fund, all which added together, make a sum of thirteen millions annually raised upon the people of Great Britain, in time of profound peace; and upon the fund above stated of twenty-six millions. While Great Britain then is paying about one half, Ireland is paying not quite one third; or, in other words, while the productive fund of Ireland stands to that of Great Britain nearly as one to ten, her public burdens, compared to those of this island, are only as one to nineteen. If a trifling part of the taxes of Ireland are sent out of the kingdom, the taxes sent from this island to foreign parts will be found to be twenty times as great, and this is a burden which foreign acquisitions, such as Minorca and Gibraltar, entail upon Great Britain. But those acquisitions are judged necessary for maintaining the rank which this nation at present holds in Europe; and in supporting those charges, and every other that may properly be called foreign, Ireland pays but a very small share in.

in proportion to her income, and when considered as a collective part of the British nation.

I have avoided taking the quantity of money in either kingdom into the account of its respective productive funds, as that is almost universally measured by the rents of the lands, excepting in some commercial states, where the spirit of amassing and hoarding in a length of years forms many large dead funds, which are not known to exist, but as great occasions bring them into circulation. Much money cannot long be used in circulation, without proportionably affecting the rents of the lands; nor can the rents of lands be heightened in any extraordinary degree, without rendering a greater quantity of money, either nominal or real, necessary in circulation. The practice of modern times likewise, in the unlimited coinage of paper, shews that it depends wholly upon the inclination of a community, whether it should have much money or not; and Ireland, if she pleased, might in a few months possess as full an abundance of money as Great Britain. If a large currency, or as M. Pinto calls it, *l'augmentation de numeraire*, be so essential as he represents it, Ireland would do well directly to issue out a greater quantity of paper; but I suspect, in that case, the augmented price of her products and manufactures would soon convince her, that she had done better to have founded her politics upon the maxim of Sir William Petty, "that
 "it is very ill husbandry to increase the cash
 "of a nation otherwise than by increasing
 "its wealth, simul & semel." This maxim
 C likewise

likewise requires its modification; but we see in the example of our North American colonies, that societies may yearly increase their wealth and opulence, without having any money among them that can be said to have an intrinsic value. And Great Britain herself would soon be in the same circumstances with her American colonies, with regard to cash, were she obliged directly to refund all the money she at present owes to foreigners; there is therefore no great reason to look upon the quantity of circulating money as of much consequence in the estimate of the yearly income of a state.

It has been proved, I think demonstratively, that the taxes raised in Ireland are nearly one half less than those raised in Great Britain, in proportion to the respective ability of each island. But should Ireland be put upon an equality with Great Britain in point of the freedom of trade, which true policy dictates the propriety of, it is but natural to require, that she should also be placed nearer to an equality with this island in respect to the public burdens; and that may be done most advantageously for Ireland, by a land-tax, to rise and fall, as the land-tax in Great Britain rises and falls; for in all military armaments, there can be no cause of expence to this island, that ought not to be a proportionable cause of expence to the neighbouring island. If no other civilized state in Europe but Ireland, and none in Asia that we know of, and no community among the European colonies in America, think proper wholly to exempt lands from public burdens, an impartial considerer, without weighing any other circumstances, would be apt to conclude that there is more of impolicy than true policy

licy in such an exemption in Ireland. But should he find that taxes in Ireland, instead of being laid upon the *most opulent*, are, in many cases laid upon the *most miserable*, who have hardly any means of industry, he would think himself justified in affirming, that the nation could not thrive as might be expected, till a reform was made in such an essential article. The lands in Ireland lie under a heavier burden than if they were to pay three shillings, or even four shillings, in the pound to the support of government; which burden presses also upon the commerce and industry of the inhabitants. This burden is the high rate of the interest of money in that island, the disadvantages of which are generally acknowledged, and need not here be detailed; but, happily for Ireland, and I may also say for Great Britain, the legislature of that kingdom have it wholly in their power, by the easiest and most constitutional means, to reduce that rate to three per cent. Such a reduction of interest would of consequence raise the value of estates nine or ten years purchase, that is, would render land a possession by one fourth more valuable than at present; which would be more than a full equivalent for a direct transition to a land-tax, a tax which, like all others, is paid by the industrious consumers. Were the value of the lands of Ireland doubled, the gentlemen of that island would not only be gainers, but the inhabitants would find the taxes less burdensome. Now almost the same consequences would follow, if, instead of the value of the lands, the quantity of industry were doubled, which I believe few people acquainted with Ireland will deny to

be possible with the present number of hands, But the truest means to augment not only the marketable but the real value of lands, is to augment the stock of industry; and nothing so likely to effect that as the opening a free trade to Ireland, and the taking off and removing the oppressive burdens from the lower class of people, which they labour under from injudicious taxes, and I am afraid from discouraging leases.

The former of these depends upon the joint concurrence of the legislature of both kingdoms; but the latter may be effected by the parliament of Ireland singly, and is so essential to the prosperity of that island, that were the same restrictions upon its trade even still to be continued, a new plan of taxation ought nevertheless to be pursued, in order to excite the poor to industry, and check the propensity to expensive luxuries in people of small incomes, who instead of following business, are tempted, from the present indulgence of the legislature, to rank themselves among the unindustrious classes. Were the great commercial cities, such as Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Belfast, &c. but properly attentive to their own as well as to the national prosperity, they might be expected to solicit such a reformation in the mode of taxation, which would give new life to commerce throughout the whole island. Where the poor have the means and the spirit of industry, they can bear great taxes, as their application to labour is a rich fund; but in a country where indolence and oppression keep the poor people beggarly, a very small imposition is more than they can bear, and makes them immediately desert their habitations, or shelter themselves

themselves still more in idleness and misery, against vexations which they look upon as arbitrary. All means to animate them to industry ought to be used; and among the most effectual may be reckoned the exempting them, as much as possible, from all direct impositions to government, and granting them long leases upon moderate terms; and should trade be opened, the assurance of good and constant wages to the workman and manufacturer. What encouragements or discouragements poor farmers in Ireland meet with from their landlords, I cannot pretend to mention; but we have one very bad symptom, in regard to the protection and encouragement of agriculture, in the frequent advertisements for tenants that are to be met with in the Dublin news-papers.

The impositions of government upon the poor may be judged of more easily; but though these impositions in the mass should not be found to be very burdensome, yet, from their discouraging nature, they may check ten times their value in industry, and in that view are very impoverishing to the state. It is not a plan of thriving to pay a million to receive one hundred thousand pounds; but if all the non-working and half-working people in Ireland, were but to labour as the lower classes of people in England, they would add above a million annually to the national income, which would have the effect of making provisions and merchandize more abundant, or of lowering the prices of them considerably. The conclusion is not always just, that because rents and wages are low in a state, one may expect in that state an abundance of every thing at the cheapest prices.

prices. On such a supposition, Siberia would be the most abundant country, where one may have twenty or thirty acres of the finest meadow for the rent of one penny. The truly affluent country is that where, independent of the mass of money in circulation, an abundance and variety of products are every day ready to be offered in exchange for an abundance and variety of manufactures, the whole the effect of the industry of the inhabitants. The two great sources of national opulence are, the fertility of the soil and the labour of the poor; and when this last is checked by injudicious taxes, and other discouraging circumstances, it has the same effect upon the mass of the people as if the lands were rendered by so many degrees more barren. One ought, therefore, to be as zealous in removing indolence from the people, as in removing barrenness from the soil. The most direct means for the former in Ireland, would be to punish with the utmost severity strolling mendicants, who not only infest the towns and villages, but parade in great numbers through the large opulent cities; to contrive premiums, if possible, for the industrious; and, by giving some marks of distinction to those who are well lodged and well clothed, to fill their minds with the spirit of amassing, which would soon make them tax each other, from rivalry, ten times more than they are now taxed by the state, and yet all increase their own wealth at the same time, and consequently the national wealth.

The eager desire of gaining and amassing among individuals has the most powerful of all effects in the promoting of industry in
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a community. Suppose forty shoe-makers, in a town, agree to make only a certain number of pairs of shoes a week, and to sell their shoes at a high price, in order to enjoy every other day as a holiday; if any one of those shoe-makers breaks the agreement, and computes, that by working six days in the week, instead of four, or twelve hours in the day, instead of eight, he could afford to sell his shoes nearly a third cheaper, he would, by conforming his practice to such a calculation, quickly have the whole trade to himself, and ruin his rivals, if they did not follow his example, and work as diligently as he. This industrious, or avaricious tradesman, having once forced his brother-workmen to be as industrious as himself, the consequence would be, that the quantity of shoes produced would be one third more, or the price one third less. The same reasoning is applicable to every other kind of manufacture; and shews what national wealth might be expected from the lower classes of people, were they but roused to a spirit of industry, and encouraged to amass some little property of their own. One great sign of the opulence of England is the frequent accounts we have, in the public papers, of eminent tallow-chandlers and eminent grocers dying worth twenty thousand and thirty thousand pounds; which opulence is not so much to be computed from the wealth possessed by those individuals, as from the rivalry that must have been produced among their fellow-workmen by their persevering industry.

Most of our writers on commerce take notice of the poverty of Spain, which they attribute to the balance of trade with the
other

other European states being continually against that nation; for they tell us, that the whole of the gold and silver which the Spaniards annually draw from their American colonies does not remain in Spain, but passes immediately to the commercial nations with whom the Spaniards trade. Now the very reason those writers assign for the poverty of Spain seems to prove it flowing from another cause; for if Spain can pay her debts to her European neighbours by the gold and silver that is annually brought from her American colonies, she ought herself, at the end of the year, to be neither poorer nor richer than she was before. The poverty of Spain then not being owing to her paying annually a large commercial balance to foreigners, there must be some other cause; and I doubt not but that cause will be found to be the laziness and idleness of the low people, from which probably that state suffers an annual loss of ten millions sterling, that is, she has yearly ten millions less to spend or to hoard; and supposing only an annual deficiency of one million in accumulation, this, in the course of two centuries, would make her sink in comparative wealth two hundred millions: and I question whether this last sum now laid out in improving her lands, roads, harbours, villages, towns, manufactures, &c. would bring her up to an equality with England at present. But besides this loss in accumulation, arising from the idleness of the working hands, there is another annual loss, from the same cause, of nine millions, in the daily expence for what may be called transitory wants, which must render the number of wretched and miserable very great in Spain, that

that is, the number of those who have nothing, or not a sufficiency to spend; and the revenues of the state, which ought to have increased from the accumulation as well as by the transitory expense, must suffer a deficiency of at least two millions annually from that neglect of industry among the lower classes of the people.

Happily for Ireland, there is another spirit in the government of that island than in the government of Spain. The warmest patriotic zeal has long animated the legislature of Ireland; and maxims having a tendency to promote the prosperity of the island are adopted and pursued by them with activity and perseverance. I cannot help remarking, however, that several prejudices still subsist among many people there, which hinder them from perceiving the true causes of the unimproved state of the island, or make them believe that insurmountable obstacles lie in the way of its prosperity. Among those prejudices, the chief may be reckoned that relating to the absentees, and another, which attributes the poverty of Ireland to the scarcity of cash, or small quantity of circulating money. The first of these has already been set in a new, and, I hope, in a true light; so as to prove the drain from absentees not peculiar to Ireland; but a drain common to every distant member of a great empire, interwoven with the very essence of all monarchical states, and, when not excessive, no ways detrimental to their highest prosperity. The other, regarding the small quantity of cash in circulation, is more the complaint of the slothful than of the industrious; and if the former of these be numerous in a nation, the

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complaint

complaint will be very general, but may not for all that be just. Individuals are counted rich according to the quantity of money they possess or can command; but it is not always so with states, or I may venture to say, it is never so: for were the English or the Dutch to be as idle as some nations are, distress and misery would prevail among them, in spite of their accumulated heaps of gold, nay, would even be more severely felt on account of those heaps. The slothful has as many wants to supply as the industrious; but disliking to have recourse to the fund of assiduous labour, which is a rich mine to the other, he lays the blame of his distresses upon the general want of money in the country, never reflecting, that if the quantity of money should be doubled, or even quadrupled, if he did not alter his manner of life, and apply to industry, a very small proportion of the augmented wealth would fall to his share, and he would feel his wants still more pressing than before. The idea that national poverty was connected with the scarcity of gold and silver, and that national wealth would be the consequence of possessing those metals, has long ago been prevalent in Ireland, as appears from the following passage of a very judicious author on trade, who wrote in the beginning of this century. "We need go
 "no further, he says, than our neighbouring
 "kingdom of Ireland to shew the delusion
 "of being rich with other people's money.
 "After the last war, in 1697, when the coin
 "was raised to a standard in England, it was
 "raised, very imprudently, about twenty per
 "cent. above it in Ireland, upon which, Ire-
 "land filled with money, more than they
 "had

“ had use for; but as soon as guineas fell
 “ from twenty-six to twenty-three, and the
 “ other coins in proportion, they who tum-
 “ bled in their money carried it out as fast,
 “ and left Ireland as it is, thus poor to a pro-
 “ verb: and so it will fare with any country
 “ that fancies itself rich with borrowed mo-
 “ ney.” (See Sir Francis Brewster’s *Essays*
on Trade, 1702), This author speaks of a
 period but five years later than the settlement
 of Ireland by king William, after a ruinous
 civil war, when agriculture, commerce, and
 manufactures were at a very low state in that
 island, and when the resource of paper cur-
 rency was not so much as known there. All
 these circumstances must doubtless have oc-
 casioned a great deal of distress among the
 people of Ireland, but they certainly grasped
 at a shadow, when they thought of remov-
 ing that distress by rating gold and silver
 twenty per cent more than their neighbours;
 nay, perhaps, forty per cent more, by not
 only taking the metals at a higher valuation;
 but, probably, paying for them an interest one
 fifth higher than that paid by their neighbours.

The notion that money of gold and silver
 is absolutely essential for the prosperity of a
 state, may in fact become the means of keep-
 ing a state poor, by preventing the inhabi-
 tants from adverting to the real sources of
 their riches, and inducing them to give a
 high price, or pay very dear for an instru-
 ment of commerce, which they can actually
 do without. In the reign of queen Elizabeth
 gold and silver could not be borrowed, but
 at an interest of ten per cent†. which was a

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tax

† From whence arose the proverb in lord Bacon’s time, *That the devil had his rythes as well as the clergy.* It is not much more than se-
 venty years since money was at ten per cent. in Ireland.

tax of a third or a fourth upon the profit of the borrower, supposing him to make thirty, or forty per cent advantage in consequence of his loan. Should only two millions have been lent at that interest in queen Elizabeth's time, it would have created a yearly burden upon industry of two hundred thousand pounds heavier than the supplies then raised annually for the government, two thirds of which burden the industrious might have got rid of by having recourse to another medium of commerce. This expedient would have been thought impossible in those days; but fact and experience, in modern times, justify the practicability and great utility of it. Supposing a number of monied men were to carry their cash to some of our colonies in America, and graciously offer the inhabitants the use of their money at an interest of ten per cent, as the means of quickly enriching the colony, the colonists might justly reply to those monied men, "We regard a fertile soil as the one thing needful for the sustenance of life. Let us but have that, and with it and our own industry, we do not despair of enriching ourselves and our posterity without the immediate assistance of gold and silver; therefore, as we find we can do without your money, you may carry it to those who set a value upon it, or see if you can extract from it food and cloathing as we can from our lands." Most of our American colonists, if we regard their manner of conducting their internal commerce, give in fact this reply by their actions. They have, within these hundred years, extracted above two hundred millions from their lands, built many

many cities, launched thousands of ships, acquired large stocks of cattle, and much other substance, with very little aid from gold and silver; and were all other communities actuated by the same spirit, the monied men would find themselves exactly in the situation of Midas, and see the industrious well cloathed and well fed, while they themselves were starving.

Few countries on the globe in the northern latitudes afford such resources of wealth from the fertility of the soil as Ireland affords; yet by far too great a proportion of the lands of that island are lying much in the same state as they were left by the flood of Noah. The people, instead of bestowing attention upon that immense annual loss, keep up the cry of ruin on account of the scarcity of cash, and some years ago were filled with the greatest alarms, and looked upon themselves as on the point of perdition, from a threatened importation of brass halfpence, a puny evil, which must in its very operation soon have corrected itself, though not one syllable had ever been written against it. Ireland, though inhabited from the greatest antiquity, is quite a young commercial state; therefore, as no gold and silver mines are wrought in that country, it is not in the least surprising to find a scarcity of those metals there, which only abound in states that have had for a long course of years a lucrative commerce, without the exhausting drain of expensive foreign wars. The commercial existence of Ireland can hardly be traced farther back than that of our American colonies, and even now its trade cannot, properly speaking, be said to have acquired such a maturity as that of the colonists,

colonists, when we consider the shameful deficiency of shipping in that island, the reproach of which is, in part, owing to impolitic regulations, and imprudent counsels in Great Britain. The Irish have, no doubt, bought and sold with their neighbours for ages past, but not with the systematic view of accumulation and profit, that has prevailed since the Revolution, to the great advantage of the island, which has more than doubled its stock of wealth since that period, without adding in the least, perhaps, to its quantity of gold and silver. The slothful and discontented keep their eyes upon this last circumstance, and will not see the former, which is by far the most essential.

Were they, however, but properly to consider the consequences arising from a small stock of money in circulation, instead of looking on it as a cause of discouragement, they would draw from it one of the greatest incitements to industry. Every thing to be purchased at home, if they are but industrious, will be purchased the cheaper for it. Were the expence of living equal in both islands, many more land proprietors would be tempted to crowd to London; but while Dublin continues less luxurious, and less expensive than the capital of Great Britain, Irish families, of good fortunes, if they have children to provide for, will chuse not to quit Ireland, which will prevent the drain of absentees from becoming excessive†. High

† Some people at Dublin, to prove the opulence and the flourishing state of Ireland, have vaunted that living was as dear at that capital as at London, which, if true, would be a real cause of lamentation to the Irish, and not of boasting; for nothing could happen more prejudicial to Ireland than such an equality, which ought to be prevented by every kind of attention on the part of the Irish. With the same judgment, some people give it as a proof of England's being the richest country in Europe, because it is the dearest.

wages,

wages, and high perfection in the arts, are no more necessarily connected together, than national poverty is with a small quantity of gold and silver. Do the people of Geneva sell the fewer watches, because they sell them cheap, that is, because they work for low wages? On the contrary, the very circumstance of cheapness, occasions so great a demand for watches from thence, that a full third of the inhabitants of the republic, or about thirteen thousand people, (two or three thousand of whom are women,) gain their livelihood by that branch of manufacture. Were the great masters in painting, who flourished in Italy two or three hundred years ago, inferior in merit to our modern portrait painters, because they did not receive so much for five or six of their performances as ours gain by one of theirs? Are the porcelain manufactures in China, or the weavers in the East Indies less skilful than ours, because they work for two-pence and three-pence a day? These few instances, not to mention many others, may serve to shew the fallacy of that maxim, that cheap countries are consequently bad and necessarily poor countries, where the arts must absolutely languish. A cheap country is, to an enterprising manufacturer, the same thing as new soil to a skilful planter or farmer. Both give the most just expectation of the richest returns of industry. What, but the cheapness of countries, first drew the hardware manufacture to Birmingham, and the great woollen manufacture to Yorkshire and Westmoreland? What fixes the glass works at Newcastle and Bristol, but the cheapness of firing, an article that makes great part of the expence of glass.

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Now

Now among an industrious people, what else is cheapness or lowness of wages, than, *the having a great deal of labour for a small quantity of money?* And can any circumstance be more favourable than this to a nation, that has manufactures to carry to a foreign market, where they may meet with a competition with the manufactures of other nations? Where two states offer merchandize of equal goodness, that state which can sell the cheapest, will not only be sure of the readiest market, but will in all probability gain more by what it sells, than the other state which sells dear. Great Britain being obliged, on account of her immense national debt, to keep up an excessive circulation, has thereby rendered provisions and wages so dear, that she has in a great degree precluded herself from foreign markets; and this dearth is far from being owing to the over great plenty of silver and gold; for were all her paper money but suppressed for three or four months, the most presuming of the opulence of Great Britain would soon be convinced of the absolute scarcity of real cash. The immensity of her taxes, however, renders this artificial aid in circulation at present necessary, and her merchants must fight their way in foreign markets in the best manner they can, though it be probable their commissions from abroad would be doubled, could they afford their merchandize at lower prices. Whatever eagerness foreigners express for British manufactures, the dearth of those manufactures damps their ardour for purchasing them. I remember a very enterprising foreign retailer, who had received a quantity of Birmingham goods, which he much admired, being great-
ly

ly puzzled, nevertheless, with the invoice, the articles of which were written in French; and the sums specified in English money. He was hugging himself with the thoughts of a great bargain, and was forming plans of large dealings with England, having interpreted the £. and the s. in the invoice into livres and sols; but when those letters were explained to him as denoting pounds and shillings, (three and twenty times more than he had imagined) the utmost amazement was visible on his countenance, and he immediately said that he must write directly to his correspondent, to lend him no more goods, as he feared he should not be able to sell those he had already received. Thus Great Britain, by her superabundance of wealth, has in a great degree cut herself off from dealing to advantage with her poorer neighbours; but this is not a situation to be envied by Ireland. On the contrary, nothing could be more unfortunate for the Irish, than to have money as abundant in their island as it is in England; and indeed while England makes a branch of a sovereignty, it is not in the nature of things that money should be so plentiful there as in the provinces near the center of government, which is at the same time the center of commerce. But it does not follow from thence that poverty and misery should prevail in Ireland, as an acre may be equally prolific and fertile when rented at a shilling as when let at a guinea, and a manufacturer, who labours diligently twelve hours a day, will finish the same quantity of work, whether his wages be six pence a day or half a crown. The capital maxim to be observed in Ireland is, that the rents of the lands should

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bear

bear a proportion to the small quantity of currency; and in this view there seems to have been no less of sound policy than of humanity in the order sent home by lord Charlemont, when he was absent on his travels, Not to raise the rents of his tenants. If lands and industry in Ireland are too much neglected, money is there too much esteemed, I mean trade is there burdened by the too high rate of the interest of money, when, as I have above observed, the present period affords a most constitutional expedient for reducing that rate to four or even three per cent. There is neither so much trade, nor so much money in the duchy of Tuscany as in Ireland, yet at this very time the three per cents, at Florence are sold above par. Were the interest of money reduced in Ireland, and the poor people to enjoy a settled comfortable life, free from vexations and from burdensome takes, abundance would soon be more generally diffused, from their application to industry, and their confidence in the secure possession of their own labour. In this case the complaints of the want of cash might soon be turned into boastings of the cheapness of living, which contributes as much to the advancement of population, and the attracting of strangers, as the opinion of high wages; witness the frequent emigrants to America, who generally assign that as the cause of their voluntary transportation. But the wants of mankind are of more kinds than one. Real abundance consists in having manufactures at easy prices, as well as food; and the legislature of Ireland, with proper attention, and by making an alteration in the modes of taxation, might promote this two fold plenty
much

much more generally throughout the island, without any augmentation of the present currency.

The throwing too much of the public burdens upon the poor, and exempting lands from taxes, is greatly detrimental to the state in another view than that of checking the industry of manufacturers and labourers. The indolent land-proprietor of two or three hundred a year, who lives upon his estate, who kills his own meat, brews his own beer, bakes his own bread, makes his own candles, &c. is a subject, who, by the present mode of taxation, lives very uselessly for the state, as the government can draw very little, either from him or his property, three fourths of which perhaps lies unimproved, or in a state of nature, which is an essential loss to the public. Take a number of journeymen in a manufacturing town, whose revenues together are but equal to that of the above-mentioned landholder, and it will be found that their share of the public taxes is twice as great as his, the state at the same time being enriched by their industry to four or five times the amount of the taxes paid by them. Such a landholder, by his manner of life, not only contributes little to the public burdens, but actually keeps the nation from thriving; for, by suffering his wide domain to lie in a state of nature, when, by proper cultivation in the hands of wealthy tenants, it might be made to yield four or five times as much, he obstructs the improvement of territory, which is the greatest of all national improvements. Would it not rather be an advantage than a detriment to the state to tax the lands of such a proprietor, and would not trade be

greatly advanced, if landlords of small properties, who now live idly upon their estates, were induced to betake themselves to commerce or manufactures, in the easy prosecution of which, their land-revenues would not a little assist them? This we see often practised in England and in France; and manufacturers or merchants, who traffic with such stocks, can certainly afford to sell cheaper, and push a more extensive trade, than those who carry on commerce with borrowed funds. Whatever tends to diminish the number of *workers*, and the increase the number of *wasters*, hurts a state; but few things have a greater tendency to promote both these, than to encourage, by an almost total exemption from public burdens, landlords of small properties to live idly, and to breed up their families in the same manner of living.

From what has been written above, I think it plainly appears, that the people of Ireland are far from being so poor as they imagine themselves to be, from their small stock of currency; and likewise, that they are not so burdened, either by their taxes or their absentees, as they generally believe. That the wealth of Ireland does not correspond with the extent and fertility of her territory, with the riches of her surrounding seas, and her convenient situation for foreign commerce, every one acquainted with that island will most readily allow; but I am far from attributing that to heavy taxation, to the drains of absentees, or to the small quantity of cash. It is much more applicable to the clashing and animosity of different religions, which have dulled the hand of husbandry, to the very uncultivated state of the lands, to the high interest

interest of money, to discouraging leases, to the want of dock-yards and ship carpenters, and the employment of foreign ships, to the luxurious indulgence in foreign products and manufactures, to injudicious taxes, and above all to a partially limited foreign trade,

This last is certainly the greatest grievance of all others, and has long been a reproach to the counsels of Great Britain; for while it has subsisted, it may very justly be said, to have been attended with no less prejudice to this island than to Ireland. That ill founded narrow principle of conforming our commercial regulations to the Dutch model, misled some of our politicians in the last century, to make the absurd supposition, that our circumstances might be bettered, if half our territory were destroyed, that is, if what yielded us annually the value of fifteen millions were annihilated. It was better, according to them, to fetch corn from Poland, than to have it of our own growth, better to bring black cattle by sea from the Baltic, or the coast of the Adriatic, than to drive them from our own mountains. The Dutch, they said, were acquiring opulence and power, and were amassing wealth faster, and in a higher degree, than any other state in Europe: therefore happy the state that could imitate them, and put itself in their situation, which would raise it to a degree of eminence superior to what it could expect from a large and fertile territory; though they alledged nothing to prove that maxims of industry might not prevail in the large territory, as well as in the narrow swamp; and totally overlooked the wealth that nature spontaneously

spontaneously produces from territory alone independent of the industry of man, which is sometimes one third of the wealth of a state. The Dutch, at this moment, are sinking in their importance in Europe, from the very cause formerly assigned by our political writers for their opulence and grandeur, I mean the narrowness of territory; and their immense stocks of money, their number of ships, and their populous towns will not be able to secure them against a still farther decline, should their maritime neighbours become more active in commerce, and appropriate to themselves their natural advantages. Should Great Britain assert the same exclusive right of fishing in her seas at home, as she has secured in the seas of Newfoundland; and should other European nations imitate her example in that particular; should all the different spices of the East be raised in the British, French, and Spanish West Indies; and should each nation be the carrier of its own merchandize, the power and opulence of the Dutch would soon become proportioned to the narrowness and badness of their territory, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of industry on the part of the inhabitants. The histories of past ages most plainly declare, that power, founded on commerce in a narrow territory, has always been precarious and transitory; nevertheless the splendid period of the Dutch republic so dazzled the minds of many people in England, that they forgot their own natural advantages to over-rate theirs, and could they but acquire commerce, were not solicitous within what narrow limits it was restrained, falsely esteeming the balance of wealth procured by trade before

before the advantages arising from widening the circle of industry over a fertile soil, possessing above three thousand miles of sea-coast.

What should we think of the governments of France and Spain, should they lay penal restrictions upon one third of their provinces, in regard to industry and trade, with a view of procuring an accumulation of wealth to the other two thirds. The commonest observer, upon reading such an article of intelligence in a gazette, supposing him a British subject, might make the following comment upon it. This is a circumstance extremely favourable to Great Britain. The French and Spaniards, by such a political regulation, will most effectually check their own power; for the provinces thus laid under penal restrictions, whatever natural advantages they possess, must necessarily languish, and yield much less profit to the whole than they would otherwise do; and in the favoured provinces, things will soon rise to such high prices, and manufactures will become so dear, that they will no longer rival ours in foreign markets, or be poured in upon us by our smugglers. While the French and Spaniards continue thus blind to their own interest, they will become every day less objects of jealousy to us.

But it is not the French and the Spaniards who act thus imprudently; it is the inhabitants of Great Britain. What must the French and Spaniards think of us, when they see us neglect one third of our provinces, while our foreign trade is actually threatened with a stagnation in the other two thirds, on account of the excessive dearness of provisions

fions and labour? Though Ireland, on account of its vicinity to us, and its subjection to the same sovereign authority with ourselves, ought to have been considered merely as a part of Great Britain, and a very considerable part, our legislature has nevertheless most impolitically neglected the interests of Ireland, from a false persuasion of thereby advancing the interests of this island. But the advancing the interest of both islands, as one object, ought ever to have been the point aimed at in all general deliberations of Great Britain. A commercial nation, that would wish to secure a permanent grandeur, must found her power on the broad basis of territory, every part of which territory ought proportionally to enjoy the advantages arising from the commercial balance. When the nourishment, that is, when industry and commerce, are justly distributed, all the parts become vigorous, and the strength of the whole will daily encrease, till it bear a proportion to the extent of the territory, nay, may even exceed that proportion, and still be counted natural, if the territory be bounded every where by the sea, and have on all sides numbers of excellent ports.

These last circumstances are wholly applicable to the natural situation of Great Britain and Ireland; and were our commerce to be regulated by them, it might be rendered much more extensive and more lucrative, and consequently the collective strength of both islands be greatly augmented. But now the political as well as the natural situation of Great Britain and Ireland points out to us the urgent necessity of a communication of commercial advantages to the latter island; and
shews

shews most plainly, that to persevere in the present system of exclusion would be the height of impolicy. Great Britain ought no longer to regard Ireland as a rival *Sister*, but as a *joint Parent* of America; in which case Ireland would soon have a parent's concern, and would concur with pleasure in maintaining our and her own rights and interests in that part of the world against every European disturber. The time, I say, is at length arrived for a total change of system in regard to Ireland; and, therefore, the legislature of Great Britain will now, most undoubtedly, advance the prosperity of both islands, by enacting, in conjunction with the legislature of the neighbouring kingdom, That the foreign trade of Ireland be, in every respect, put upon the same footing as the foreign trade of Great Britain; That the duties laid in either kingdom, upon the products or manufactures of the other, be reciprocally suppressed and abolished; and that all vessels sailing from one island to the other be considered as coasting vessels, and be subject only to the same regulations as such vessels are subject to; that the communication and trade between Ireland and the British settlements in America and Africa, be put upon the same footing as the trade between Great Britain and those settlements; That, in consideration of this general liberty of trade, the kingdom of Ireland shall always pay for the support of government, and the public defence of the state, a land-tax of equal rate with the land-tax of Great Britain for the time being; That the denominations and the value of the denominations of money shall be the same in both kingdoms; That the port duties or customs upon all merchandize, exported or imported, be

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the

the same in Ireland, as in Great Britain; That the rate of the interest of money be reduced in Ireland; That the additional taxes, raised as an equivalent for a freedom of trade, be always appropriated to the building of ships of war, and the maintaining and supporting a naval strength in Ireland, &c. These, and such other regulations as may appear most fitting to the prudence of each legislature for putting both islands upon a perfect equality in respect to foreign trade, would soon animate industry in Ireland, and consequently increase her annual income, and render her of much more advantage to Great Britain than she is at present.

I am very sensible, that the proposal I have made of granting a freedom of trade to Ireland, will have many prejudices, and partial interests to encounter with; but I am at the same time persuaded, that those who will impartially weigh the present state of both islands, will most readily acknowledge both the *equity* and the *expediency* of such a freedom of trade. Old prejudices ought to have no weight, when the causes that gave rise to them have ceased: and all partial and private interests ought to yield to the interest of the public, I mean that of the whole community. It would be injurious, some will say, to the inhabitants of this island to put the Irish upon the same footing with them in regard to foreign trade, since the Irish do not bear such heavy public burdens as the former, that is, do not contribute so amply to the general charges of the state. This has been, and is still, the chief and most plausible objection against extending the freedom of trade to Ireland; but as the reasoning contained in it proves too much, it proves nothing; for by the

the same argument more than the half of England, with all Scotland, ought to be cut off from the freedom of trade, since they together do not contribute so much to the public burdens as the county of Middlesex joined to fourteen or fifteen other home counties †. Great Britain, taken collectively, contributes in a greater proportion to the public burdens than Ireland, taken in the same view; but that is owing to the immense circulation and expence of London, the common capital of the whole empire; and in supporting the excessive expence of that center of union, Ireland, as a member, contributes her share, together with the remote parts of England, with Scotland, America, and the East and West Indies. Ireland, in all our political deliberations, ought to be considered merely as a remote part of Great Britain; and if we examine her public burdens in that view, and compare them with those levied in any part of this island at a great distance from the capital, and of equal extent with Ireland, the disproportion between the Irish and those British taxes will not be very considerable. To lessen that disproportion, and to bring the burdens in both nearer to an equality, I have proposed some augmentation in Ireland, by a land-tax, to rise and fall as that tax shall rise and fall in Britain; the most equitable, in point of imposition, and the most conducive to forward and promote industry in Ireland. Besides, considering Ireland merely as a remote part

† Such an exclusion would be making one monopoly the cause of another; for the great proportion of taxes paid by the capital is, owing to one sixth of our foreign trade, namely, the East India trade, being monopolized by the port of London.

part of Great Britain, it ought, on that very account, to be more favoured in point of taxation than the provinces near the center of government, as circulation, both in the natural and political body, is always more languid towards the extremities than towards the heart; and wages and rents ought naturally to be always lower in Ireland than in the countries near London. Should the Irish then consent to but a small augmentation of taxes, in that case, they could no longer be said to stand precluded from the *right to the freedom of trade.*

The mercantile short sighted policy of confining the woollen manufactures to England, has likewise been another objection to the extending the freedom of trade to Ireland; and has, in its consequences, been attended with many losses and disadvantages to Great Britain, by throwing that branch of manufacture into the hands of our continental rivals, who hold an interest contrary to ours. Had we considered Ireland, as in true policy it ought always to have been considered, merely as a part of Great Britain, we should never have thought that the woollen manufacture moved from home, when we saw a branch of it flourish in Ireland. Indeed, there ought to be no more cause of alarm in seeing the woollen manufacture, or any other manufacture, flourish in Ireland, than in seeing another Birmingham rise in Sussex, or another Leeds rise in Dorsetshire. Whoever should urge the arguments used in King William's time, or in the time of King Charles II. for justifying the jealousy of trade in regard to Ireland, would reason extremely false upon the subject. Those arguments, even then, were far from

from being conclusive; and had they even been just at that period, the political state of both islands is of late years so greatly altered, that they would be false now. England, at that time, might be said to have hardly any intercourse or trade with America, so inconsiderable were the American colonies then, to what they are at present; neither was Scotland then united with her, nor had she the manufactures of silk, of cotton, of hardware, of hats, of paper, with twenty other kinds, that have since taken root and now flourish among us. She was then almost confined to one single species of manufacture: namely, the woollen, the market for which, both foreign and domestic, was twice as extensive as at present. In those times, our ladies wore stuffs; now, even our very servant maids are cloathed in silks and cottons. The same alteration has taken place in most of the nations abroad; and even in the silk countries, the consumption of silks is much more considerable at present than it was an hundred years ago; all of which circumstances have contributed to make the woollen manufacture an object of much less importance in these days than it was in former times. The English, in the last century, having in a manner but one manufacture, and being totally unacquainted with any other, saw nothing but misery and poverty, should they be rivalled in that by their neighbours of Ireland, whom they very falsely considered as people with hostile intentions, wishing for nothing so much as to have a religion and interest to themselves. The bitter animosity manifested in the late religious civil wars gave some colour to such a suspicion, especially as England could not then

then depend upon the joint assistance of Scotland, and had then no East and West India revenue; and Ireland, joined to the great advantage of low wages, a superfluous abundance of the first material. What a different figure does Great Britain now make, with lands improved from one extremity of the island to the other, with amazingly extensive and wide-spreading colonies, that absolutely demand an enlargement of the trunk that is to sustain and support them, with not one manufacture alone, but with many, brought to great perfection, and an assured market for them among her American subjects; and how different, likewise, is the state of Ireland from what it was in former times.

The cruel civil war, of nine years continuance, had so exhausted Ireland, that in the beginning of the reign of Charles II. it had the air of a new settled colony. The opposite parties, not contented with shedding each other's blood, had spitefully slaughtered each other's cattle, which soon introduced a famine, that proved more wasteful than the sword. If we add to those two calamities the desertion of great numbers of inhabitants, it may justly be concluded, that at the settlement by Cromwell there was hardly half the number of people in the island that there is in it at present. It seems to have been settled then much in the same manner as we now settle the colony of Florida. The grants of the adventurers, for want of inhabitants, were disposed of at the greatest undervaluation; and, to procure tenants and cultivators, many leases of lands were granted for terms of ninety-nine years, at a groat an acre; some
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of which leases have, of late years, been renewed, at a guinea an acre. Other instances might be produced to prove the great depopulation of the island at what is called its settlement after the civil war. When tranquillity was restored, improvement would immediately take place; but stocks of people are not so easily nor so quickly recruited as stocks of cattle and sheep, which last, we find, were then exported thither, in great numbers, from England: the consequence of which was, that Ireland was soon over-run with herds and flocks, and had much more wool and provisions than her small number of inhabitants could consume. Wages being then extremely low, in consequence of the great lowness of rents, it was most natural for the Irish to think of turning their superfluity to advantage; and for the English, from the false maxims of policy, that then filled their minds, to look upon them as formidable rivals, never suspecting that rivals truly formidable might start up in other quarters. Ireland, in its modern state, presents us with a very different prospect. The number of its inhabitants is doubled, consequently the home-consumption of its wool and provisions must likewise be doubled; and therefore the disproportion between the people and the flocks cannot now be so great as formerly, since much more land must now be occupied by tillage, both for corn and flax, and the great luxury in horses, so much increased of late years, demands a considerable part of the pasturage to be appropriated for them. The Irish are endeavouring yearly to throw more of their lands into tillage, as they now see the great impolicy of growing a
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sufficient quantity of corn for their own subsistence; and should they succeed in that economical plan, and should a free and enlarged trade increase the number of their people, and raise the value of their lands, we should soon hear no more of the superabundance or cheapness, either of their cattle or their wool, as they would, on this last supposition, still require a greater quantity of both for their own consumption, and the value of land being raised, would raise the prices of what the farmer brought to the market.

The breeders of cattle in the grazing counties in Great Britain will likewise cry out, that their interests will be affected upon allowing a freedom of importation from Ireland; but if we appeal to experience, we may safely affirm, that they need not be greatly alarmed on this subject; for I may ask, if the gentlemen of the grazing counties in England found themselves sensibly injured immediately after the union with Scotland, when the southern market was opened for Scotch cattle, which have ever since been sent into England in numbers ten times greater than can ever be expected to come from Ireland, should a free communication be opened between Great Britain and that island? When all obstructions to the mutual commerce of the two islands are removed, the prices of things, of course, will gradually approach near to an equality in both countries, which will greatly promote the ease of living through the whole; for it is not for the interest of a state that any one county, or any one part, should possess an artificial advantage over the others. It is the improving
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the natural advantages that best promotes the general welfare. The breeding of horses is much more lucrative than the breeding of cattle; but the excessive dearness of butchers-meat seems to prove that the soil of Great Britain does not suffice for breeding both in the degree that our wants require for home-consumption and exportation. If we would wish, therefore, to continue the advantageous commerce of the exportation of horses, and at the same time have provisions at moderate prices, we ought, without delay, to allow the free importation of Irish cattle, by which expedient, the labouring poor would be enabled to live upon their present wages, while the profits of the landed gentlemen in general would not be in the least abated. Whoever considers the traffic for cattle and sheep carried on between Scotland and England, must acknowledge, that it is extremely advantageous both to the northern and southern parts of this island; but no reason can be given in favour of that traffic, that does not equally plead for opening a communication of the same kind between Ireland and Great Britain. That the want of such a communication was a great prejudice to England, was the opinion of one of the ablest of our political writers†, who makes it a query, “Whether it would
 “not be best for both kingdoms to take off
 “the prohibition that now lies on Irish cattle?
 “—It remains very doubtful, he says, when
 “this prohibition was set on foot, which was
 “most consulted, public good or private
 “interest; the numbers of the breeding
 “were, without doubt, stronger at that time
 “than those of the feeding lands. But it is
 “to be feared, in the making that act, that
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† See Davenant's Political Works, vol. II. p. 257. Whitworth's edition.

“ the general interest of England was not sufficiently considered.” If the free admission of Irish cattle would have promoted the interest of England seventeen years ago, as may be plainly inferred from the words of Davenant, there seems much stronger reason to conclude, that such an importation, in the present period, would be extremely beneficial to this island, and would effect more in bringing provisions to moderate prices, and keeping them so, than can be expected from the most patriotic subscription for that purpose, the consequences of which, it is to be feared, will be only temporary.

But all the objections to the proposed regulations for a freedom of trade to Ireland will not be on the side of the inhabitants of Great Britain: the interested in Ireland will likewise have their objections to some clauses, particularly to that for suppressing and abolishing the duties laid in either kingdom upon the products and manufactures of the other. This article, they will alledge, will open a door to the excessive importation of English manufactures into Ireland, to the detriment of the manufactures of that country. The clause is certainly meant to promote the intercourse between the inhabitants of both islands; for when I mentioned the excessive indulgence in foreign products and manufactures, as one of the reasons of the low state of Ireland, I was far from intending to rank the products and manufactures of Great Britain as foreign in Ireland: on the contrary, I am most fully persuaded, that it would be for the advantage of both islands that

that nothing belonging to the one should be looked upon as foreign in the other. Allowing that the clause will contribute to increase the sale of English manufactures in Ireland, it will nevertheless have many other consequences, besides that, which ought also to be taken into the account, and which, on the whole, will most undoubtedly tend to the advantage of Ireland separately, as well as collectively with Great Britain. By this clause, Irish manufactures, that are now prohibited in Great Britain, would be importable hither; and Irish products, also prohibited, would have a new, and, at the same time, a most free and extensive market, with hardly any risk of sea. And by a subsequent clause in the same proposed regulation, tobacco, sugar, rum, and other products of the American colonies, may be brought directly into Ireland; by which the Irish will be gainers in a double respect, first, in having those articles cheaper, and next, in raising the same public revenue from the importation of them as is raised in Great Britain. But in such an intricate subject as this, we can best of all judge of what may happen by what has happened. When we have the experience of a similar case before our eyes, the consequences we would draw from the present have then a degree of certainty equal to demonstration. At the union of England and Scotland, did either kingdom suffer when the barriers that obstructed mutual commerce were broke down? Did not both, on the contrary, gain by the open communication? Before that period, the prohibitions were extremely rigorous in both kingdoms, in regard to each others products and manufactures;

but though Scotland now consumes ten times more of English manufactures than she did seventy years ago, and her absentees are an hundred times more numerous; so far from being impoverished by those two seemingly alarming circumstances, she is increased in riches, people, and manufactures, considerably. We may be confident, therefore, that the same thing would happen to the Irish, were every prohibition and restraint removed in the mutual commerce of the two islands, and a general freedom of trade granted to Ireland,

Many people in Ireland, from interested or from narrow views, will also be ready to object to that article proposing the port-duties, or customs, to be the same in both kingdoms upon all merchandize exported or imported. Such an article, it may be said, would alter the present channels of commerce to the Irish, and deprive them of some markets, where it is generally supposed they trade to advantage. But it ought to be remembered, that a freedom of trade cannot be granted to the Irish without such a condition, which, if it would bar up some channels of trade to them, would open others equally lucrative, and much more natural. Without such a condition there could be no equality, and consequently no freedom of trade between Great Britain and Ireland; for many foreign commercial articles, now in a manner prohibited in Great Britain, have a very easy entry into Ireland; and it would be absurd to establish a reciprocal freedom of trade between the two islands, and suffer foreign articles, the importation of which into Great Britain is deemed prejudicial to our interests, to be freely imported into

into Ireland, from whence they could be so easily introduced into this island. The Irish, however, in exchanging some of their present channels of trade for others, would not only be gainers in procuring, upon that condition, a general freedom of trade, but would also gain considerably in the very change of the markets. For example, in the great staple article of provisions, the British market, with that of the West Indies, would certainly be ample equivalents for any diminutions in the markets in France, Spain, and other foreign countries, where they now trade. Should French wines, and some other foreign articles of luxury become somewhat dearer in Ireland upon such a revolution, many other articles would become cheaper; and the latter may be set to counterbalance the former. The sunshine of arts and industry is in a manner spread over only one half of Ireland; and two of her provinces may, at this very day, be called provinces of France, as much as provinces of Great Britain. This unnatural connexion with France, so detrimental both to Ireland and Great Britain, has certainly been promoted by the imprudent restraints laid here upon the trade of Ireland; and what do the Irish chiefly gain by this connection? That their low people may riot in poor French claret, the consumption of which is too much encouraged over the whole island, on account of its cheapness, which has served as a premium to bring it within the reach of those who, from their stations in life, would otherwise in all probability, have been contented with home-brewed liquors. Were the Irish, instead of trading so largely with France, to have a free trade to Great Britain
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and to the British West Indies, with back-freights of sugar and rum from thence, directly to Ireland, the consumption of rum would greatly increase in that island, and might in time supersede the consumption of French wines, to the great advantage of our West India islands. It is universally allowed, that an extension of our sugar colonies would tend to enlarge the trade of Great Britain with foreign nations; and yet, by impolitic restraints thrown upon Ireland, we in a manner deprive our sugar colonies of that market, and force the Irish to a very general consumption of foreign sugars. If the North Americans are suffered to carry home sugars, rum, and molasses, without restraint, and no inconveniences have been alledged to attend that commerce, it is certainly full time for us to awaken from our lethargic dream, and to permit a free intercourse between Ireland and all our American settlements; and in that case it might be expected, that the Irish merchants, though they might at first have some repugnance in quitting their old and accustomed channels of commerce, would soon find the new trade proposed more fitted to the prosperity of Ireland, more lucrative to themselves, and much more conducive to advance the strength and grandeur of the British empire in general.

The lowering the rate of the interest of money in Ireland, is no less necessary for the prosperity of that island than a general freedom of trade; and is proposed as an article in the above commercial regulations, with the double view of promoting industry in Ireland, and of obtaining a further reduction of interest in Great Britain, which operation

ration will be greatly facilitated by a previous reduction of interest in Ireland. About twelve years hence an opportunity will offer for reducing a considerable part of the public debts of Great Britain to two, or two and an half per cent; but, if interest is suffered to continue high in Ireland, it will be very difficult, or next to impossible for Great Britain to draw all the advantage from that opportunity, which it will otherwise afford. Public credit in Ireland, has not yet put on the fetters of the monied men; therefore the legislature of that island, by a most constitutional expedient, may easily reduce the legal rate of interest to three, or four per cent. which would be attended with many happy consequences, both to the landed gentleman and merchant, and soon give additional vigour to the state. In proportion to the successive reductions of interest in Great Britain, has industry thriven in this island, and its power and opulence is increased. The consequences of those reductions have been so evident, both in regard to the public and to the advancement of trade, that it is now in a manner the general sentiment among all ranks of people, that the lowness of the rate of interest contributes to advance the prosperity of the nation. From some unhappy circumstances, however, or some inadvertence in our government, the space of time that has elapsed since the last reduction of interest is much greater than that between the two preceding reductions, and we, who were wont to precede some of our neighbours in that regulation, have lately suffered them to precede us; for both the French and Austrians, since the conclusion of the late peace, have

have reduced the rate of interest in their dominions to four per cent. Those operations, in states where trade and currency are far from being so considerable as in Great Britain, ought to awaken us to embrace every favourable opportunity of effecting a farther reduction of interest in this kingdom. Ireland at present affords such an opportunity; and a considerable reduction of interest in that kingdom, so very practicable at this period, would demonstrate the easy practicability of effecting the same in Great Britain, when the occasion should arise. The observation of the ingenious Dr. Price, in regard to surpluses from a high interest employed in reducing a capital, accumulating, faster than surpluses from a low interest, is nothing but a mere arithmetical computation, and, as such, is extremely just; but it is far from following from thence, that it is for the advantage of a state, to have either public debts, or those of individuals at a high interest; and I am persuaded the doctor himself would not draw such an inference from it, though some of his readers, I suspect, will be apt to interpret it as an argument in favour of the high rate of interest. I will present the reader with a politico-arithmetical computation, drawn from the rate of interest, very different from the doctor's, but which proves to a demonstration, that the low interest of money contributes essentially to lighten the burden of the national debts, or, in other words, enables the nation to bear such a load as would overwhelm her if money were at an high interest. The great pledge for the security of the repayment of the national debt is the land of Great Britain;

tain; and it is an allowed maxim, confirmed by many facts for these hundred years past, that, as the interest of money has decreased, the value of lands is risen, nearly in the proportion of five years purchase for one per cent. diminution. Suppose money then at five per cent, and lands at twenty-five years purchase, the value of the great pledge will, in that case, be twenty-five times twenty-two millions, which will amount to five hundred and fifty millions. But if we suppose money at three per cent. the marketable value of the lands would be thirty-five years purchase, or seven hundred and seventy millions, that is, the pledge would be two hundred and twenty millions of pounds more valuable on the supposition of money at three per cent. than on that of money at five per cent. Another great pledge of security to the public creditors, is the annual stock of industry of the whole nation; and the more considerable this is, the more lightly the burden will be felt: but few things tend so much to increase industry as the low rate of interest; therefore the lessening that rate, till it be brought to a par with that of our commercial neighbours, ought to be a constant object of administration; and the beginning with Ireland will give a great facility in any operation of that kind in Great Britain†.

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† Mr. Pinto, greatly distinguished for his commercial and political knowledge, not only in England, but in Holland and France, has, in a late essay upon circulation, viewed the debts of Great Britain in a singular, but very erroneous light. According to him, the national debt is a mass of riches to Great Britain, as the four millions and an half that are paid annually to the public creditors, occasion such a circulation in the state, as greatly augments the general wealth. But his reasoning upon the effects of circulation is altogether inconclusive, and has made him exaggerate any good effects the public debts may have had, without attending to their bad consequences. In page 55, he

Another article in the proposed regulations is, That the additional taxes to be raised

he tells us, that four millions of taxes paid to the public creditors, occasions fifteen or twenty millions in circulation; in another place he affirms, that one million may produce twenty millions; and in a third place, that three millions of rents may produce ten millions in circulation. Those variations shew the uncertainty of the author, in regard to the truth of his own principle, which will not bear the test of analyzing; for let us take his smallest estimate, that three millions of rents give occasion to ten millions in circulation, in that proportion, twenty-six millions and a half, which is the amount of the land rents and public annuities joined together, would occasion an annual circulation in Great Britain of eighty-eight millions. But there is another active revenue in this state, of at least forty millions, which produces the same effect in circulation as rents, consequently, in the above proportion, this ought likewise to occasion a circulation of an hundred and thirty-three millions, not to mention the king's revenue or civil list, which ought to occasion a circulation of two millions six hundred thousand pounds; and seven millions of taxes, which should produce twenty-three millions in circulation. This would make a sum total of annual circulation in Great Britain of two hundred and forty-six millions; and if such is the sum at his smallest estimate, how enormous would it be if taken at the highest proportion! Circulation is but a general word, including all purchases and sales, or the universal expence of the people in their mutual traffic with each other; and reckoning eight millions of people in Great Britain, two hundred and forty-six millions of circulations would suppose an expence of near thirty-one pounds per head, or, at six persons to a family, one hundred and eighty-three pounds for each family in Great Britain, when it is probably not much above twelve pounds per head; and was computed by Sir William Petty, an hundred years ago, but at five pounds per head. Mr. Pinto's suppositions seem to be inconclusive taken in another view; for if four millions of rents belonging to public creditors be of such importance to the state, five millions would be still more so, and six millions still better; but I fancy few people will believe that our circumstances would be improved by such an artificial revenue, that could only be raised by an augmentation of taxes. I must, however, do Mr. Pinto the justice to mention, that he himself allows a *maximum*, which the public debts ought not to exceed, though he places that *maximum* at a very great distance.

As the wealth and power of Great Britain are remarkably increased within these sixty years, and it is likewise notorious, that our public debts are more than tripled within the same space, I am afraid he has suffered himself to be misled in believing the latter to be the cause of the former. Other reasons, however, much more substantial than those drawn from circulation, may be assigned why the nation has increased in power and opulence, notwithstanding the augmented burden of the public debts. First, it may be allowed that those debts have operated some good effects. All the money raised upon loans, during our late foreign wars, has not been blown away in gun-powder; much of it has been accumulated by those who have had transactions with government, in consequence of which estates have been purchased, lands improved, and many houses built upon new founda-

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ed in Ireland, as an equivalent for a freedom
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ons. Besides, the public stock of moveables, if I may use the expression, has been thereby increased; and we may perhaps attribute part of the expence of our improved dock yards, and the building of two hundred ships of war, to that fund. Secondly, The immense tracts of common land that have been divided and inclosed, by act of Parliament in England, within these sixty years past, have in a manner enlarged our territory, by rendering the same ground by many degrees more fruitful. Thirdly, The improvements in Scotland since the Union have been so great as to enable the people there both to furnish more to the English market and to draw more from it than formerly. Fourthly, The lands over all Great Britain have been farther improved, and their marketable value more than doubled. Fifthly, The raised rents of lands have required a greater quantity of money (real or artificial) to be kept up in circulation, which, though it may be attended with great disadvantages in regard to foreign trade, at least, facilitates the payment of large taxes. Sixthly, the resources from Ireland within these sixty years, are greatly increased; and from our colonies in North America and the West Indies more than quadrupled. Seventhly, The East India Company, of late years, has added to the national wealth. Eighthly, and Last of all, the reduction of the interest of money has freed both the state and individuals from many incumbrances. In the year 1717, government was paying £. 3,356,942, as the interest of a debt of £. 44,542,356; but at present it only pays about one million more for a debt of one hundred and thirty two millions. Now as the capital debt is not demandable, it is only the interest that can be considered as the burden; therefore, in effect, the national incumbrances, instead of being tripled within these sixty years past, are actually augmented only one fourth, that is, instead of standing as three to nine, they only stand as three to four, while the fund for the security of that debt is much more than doubled; and that chiefly by a territorial improvement, or better state of the lands, reckoning Great Britain and her dependencies as one territory.

Of all the causes above assigned for diminishing the burden of the public debts, the last is, by far the most considerable; as a fall from seven per cent. to three per cent. is a fall of more than one half, and is more than equivalent to the doubling the fund for repayment. How high Great Britain may carry her credit with safety, is a question that experience alone can resolve; but should the *maximum* of accumulation be farther off than is generally imagined, one thing we may now be most certain of, that we approach very near the *minimum* of the diminution of interest; and that very addition to the public debts can now be sustained by nothing but an augmentation of taxes, which an increase of trade and of population can alone enable the nation to support. A fall of interest from three to two per cent. will operate much less than the preceding reduction from seven to three; and though the annual expence of the nation, within these sixty years, be only augmented one million on account of the public debts, yet the annual charge, for the support of government, is higher by four millions than it was in the former period, including in this last expence the accumulations of the sinking fund. These two last considerations will demonstrate

building of ships of war, and to the maintaining and supporting a naval force in that island. As a very important part of our dominion now lies beyond the Atlantic Ocean, there is nothing Great Britain ought to give more attention to at present than to the increasing her central maritime force. Instead of wasting great sums in colonizing deserts in America, she ought to spare no expence in colonizing the sea coasts of Great Britain and Ireland. These two islands together, and not Great Britain alone, ought to be considered as the *metropole*, or mother country of all the colonies; therefore, when I mention the increasing our central naval force as necessary, I do not mean that it should all be confined to the river Thames, or even to the ports of Great Britain. The increasing naval settlements upon all the coasts both of Great Britain and Ireland, would be the most likely means of inducing many people to pursue a seafaring life, and, consequently, of augmenting our home naval strength. We have hitherto, from a most ill-judged jealousy, seemed not to care how naked Ireland was left of every thing that served to maintain dominion, while the North Americans have been encouraged with all the fondness of an indulgent parent to prosecute ship-building, fisheries, and foreign commerce to a very extensive degree. Ireland, nevertheless, has certainly a much more natural claim to the prior attention of government; and her interest would have been much more linked with that of Great Britain, if her maritime ports had been more numerous and more

monstrate to every thinking person the urgent necessity of diminishing the mass of the public debts, which must now be lessened at top, as it will not be practicable, for a dozen of years to come to lessen it much at bottom,

more considerable. As the land force of Ireland does not at present require any farther expence, the additional taxes proposed could not be laid out more properly than in establishing a royal dock-yard in some port on the western or southern shores of that island. The local advantages of such an establishment, in buildings, and consumption of provisions, would redound to the county where it was made; but the maritime strength which it would raise, would as much appertain to Great Britain as that of Portsmouth or Plymouth; and the nursery of ship-carpenters and seamen, would as much serve to advance our commerce as if it were established upon the river Thames. The French and Spaniards have naval docks on the Atlantic Ocean, as well as in the Mediterranean Sea; but we who have now so much concern with the Atlantic, have yet no proper port upon it. The chief royal dock-yard of France is in the most western port of that kingdom, and in a province where the French language is not generally understood; yet, I believe, few people acquainted at all with France, will hesitate in determining, that the royal arsenal is more advantageously situated at Brest, than it would be at the mouth of the Seine. An armament fitted out in one of the western ports of Ireland, for an expedition to the Western or Southern Seas, might have the advantage of three or four weeks over one fitted out at Portsmouth for the same destination, which would not only shorten the risks at sea, but might be of great importance in regard to the lives of sailors and soldiers, and render the execution of the enterprize more certain, and less expensive.

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But instead of gaining an advantage of three or four weeks only, by sitting out on the western coast of Ireland, we might, on many occasions, gain a whole campaign, of which we had a disagreeable proof in the last war, in the armament fitted out against Louisbourg; for, in all probability, had that armament been to set sail from the west of Ireland, it would have reached Cape Breton time enough to have reduced the place a year sooner, in consequence of which Canada might have been conquered, and the war happily terminated, without the expence of so many campaigns.

To sum up all, Ireland does not now stand in the same relation to Great Britain as formerly; therefore the period is arrived for a total change of political system in regard to that island. A skilful gardener is attentive to proportion the branches of his trees to the trunks that are to support them, and as Great Britain is daily expanding her branches to a wider extent over America, true policy would dictate to us the propriety of enlarging and strengthening the trunk that is to sustain those branches, by a communication of all commercial advantages to Ireland, and considering both islands but as one. Were we but studious to promote industry in Ireland, and in the distant provinces in Great Britain, we need be no more solicitous about the ballance of trade between the two islands, than about that between Southampton and the Isle of Wight, as the gain of either would be the national gain. Though many partial interests would be affected in both islands, by putting commerce upon an equal footing in each, yet the experience of the many advantages

vantages that have accrued to England and Scotland by their mutual union, gives us a most demonstrative proof that the general national interest would be greatly promoted by granting a freedom of trade to Ireland, without any farther union of the two islands. Were the number of trading vessels and sailors in Ireland ten times greater than it now is, Great Britain would have no cause of apprehension from that, but rather matter of rejoicing. Were Ireland, in all her ports, to have naval docks, and numbers of ship-carpenters; were her quantity of circulating money to be doubled; were her lands to produce four times as much as at present, and her mines in general wrought to greater advantage, Great Britain, I say, would have nothing to apprehend from all those circumstances, and from that accumulation of power. That strength and riches would be a strength and riches co-operating with ours. The interests of both islands being put, as they naturally ought to be, upon the same level, the views of both would be the same; and the greater their intercourse with each other, the greater would be their happiness and prosperity; but still the larger island, having the advantage of the seat of empire, would maintain the superiority of wealth over the smaller. However valuable the balance of trade may be, yet to every state, the strengthening the center of dominion ought to be an object of much more importance. But both these objects are now attainable by Great Britain, in a most eminent degree, if she will consent to throw away the jealousy and rivalry of the trade of Ireland; and admit that island to an equal participation of advantages

advantages with herself, in every point relative to foreign commerce. If we regard solidity and duration, the higher we wish to raise the pyramid, the broader we ought to make the base.

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